



*Published by the
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State of Louisiana*

*For disaster-related
information, visit
www.fema.gov
www.louisiana.gov*

*Apply by Phone
(800) 621-FEMA (3362)
TTY: (800) 462-7585*

*Call 24 hours a day
seven days a week*

Katrina

Sept. 26, 2005

Baton Rouge, La.

Issue 4

Crisis Counseling Available

If you need help recovering from the trauma of Hurricane Katrina, you can get free counseling by calling any of the following toll-free, helpline numbers: **(800) 273-8255, (866) 615-8700, (888) 622-6470**. The local Baton Rouge crisis line number is **(225) 924-3900**. All of the crisis lines operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. When you call a helpline, a crisis counseling representative will provide the needed assistance. Individuals are eligible for crisis counseling services if they were in the disaster area at the time of Hurricane Katrina. The crisis counseling program is funded by FEMA and administered by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Office of Mental Health. Currently, the program has received a grant of \$1 million to provide services.

LATALK Now Online to Help

A new Web site is now available to help those separated from loved ones as a result of Hurricane Katrina reunite with displaced friends and family. LATALK is a message board that, among other functions, allows citizens to post parish-specific messages in an effort to locate lost loved ones. Most of the forums are broken down parish-by-parish for ease of use, but there are also sections for general information and important news links. Users are asked to keep in mind that most of the content in the forum is provided by other users, so the accuracy of everything posted cannot be guaranteed. An effort will be made to ensure that information posted in the forum is correct and informative. LATALK can be accessed from the state Katrina Recovery Web site at www.la.gov or directly at www.latalk.org.

Disaster Housing Resource Links

Victims of Hurricane Katrina need safe, temporary housing while their homes are being repaired or their new homes are being constructed. FEMA has immediate need for large housing resources such as commercial mobile home parks with a large number of unoccupied lots, large lots with built-in utilities, and vacant commercial buildings that could be converted to multi-family housing. Individuals or businesses who can help fulfill this need can register large housing resources at the Southwest Emergency Resource Network (SWERN), www.swern.gov. The service is free. FEMA officials search SWERN daily for potential housing resources. For property owners who have an apartment or house for rent, Florida State University operates the Disaster Housing Resource Online (DHRO), www.DHROnline.org. Individuals may list their available properties at this Web site. Information needed includes the city, parish or zip code where the property is located, price range for rent, and the number of bedrooms and bathrooms. The DHRO Web site can be easily searched by any disaster victim seeking temporary housing. There is no cost for the service.

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Important Contacts

FEMA

(800) 621-FEMA (3362)
(800) 462-7585 (TTY)

American Red Cross

(866) GET-INFO

American Red Cross Financial Assistance

(800) 975-7585

American Red Cross Find Loved Ones

(877) LOVED-1S

Department of Education

(877) 453-2721

Department of Social Services

(888) 524-3578

Disaster Legal Services

(800) 310-7029

Find Family National Call Center

(866) 326-9393

Postal Services

(800) 275-8777

Project Share a Home

(888) 827-2525

Salvation Army

(888) 363-2769

SBA Disaster Helpline

(800) 659-2955

Social Security

(800) 772-1213
(800) 325-0778 (TTY)

For information on:
Shelters, food, clothing, baby
items, health and dental care
dial **2-1-1**

Disaster Assistance

FEMA and the SBA Process

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) may send you a loan packet after you register for assistance with FEMA at (800) 621-3362 or www.fema.gov. It is very important to complete the forms in this packet and return them to the SBA as soon as possible. If you do not fill out and return the SBA application, you may not be eligible for other types of assistance. You can receive face-to-face help in filling out the SBA loan packet at any Disaster Recovery Center. For the nearest location, call the toll-free SBA Disaster Helpline at (800) 659-2955. SBA low-interest loans are available to renters, homeowners, business owners and non-profit organizations that suffered a disaster loss.

Operation Blue Roof

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can provide temporary repairs to roofs damaged by Hurricane Katrina under its Operation Blue Roof program. If you qualify for the program, a temporary roof covering will be installed at no cost. For more information, call (888) ROOF-BLU.

“Not Yet Eligible”

You may still be eligible for disaster assistance even if you receive an initial letter from FEMA that shows a \$0 assistance payment. People who are listed as “ineligible” include applicants who have been denied, but also applicants who are not yet eligible for assistance. A common reason for being considered “not yet eligible” is when applicants have not heard from their insurance company. Federal law prohibits FEMA or the state from duplicating assistance that may be available from insurance. A \$0 amount listed does not necessarily mean you are ineligible. After you receive an insurance settlement, your application will be reconsidered.

Lodging in LA Hotels, Motels

Evacuees currently residing in Louisiana hotels, who have exhausted their personal resources for lodging, may extend their stays an additional 30 days beyond the initial 14-day American Red Cross time limit. Contact the hotel’s front desk to request an extension. The Red Cross will also extend evacuees who are just now checking into hotels if needed. Hotels and motels wishing to provide housing to evacuees may register at www.corplodging.com/ARC.

Operational Hospitals

New Orleans Area

East Jefferson General Hospital (ACUTE) in Metairie
Ochsner Clinic Foundation (ACUTE) in New Orleans
West Jefferson Medical Center (ACUTE) in Marrero
Advance Care Hospital (LTAC) in Marrero
Select Specialty Hospital (LTAC) in Metairie

Northshore Area

St. Tammany Parish Hospital (ACUTE) in Covington
Slidell Memorial Hospital and Medical Center (ACUTE) in Slidell
Lakeview Regional Medical Center (ACUTE) in Covington
North Shore Regional Medical Center (ACUTE) in Slidell
Doctors Hospital of Slidell (ACUTE) in Slidell
Fairway Medical Center (ACUTE) in Covington
Louisiana Heart Hospital (ACUTE) in Lacombe
Greenbrier Hospital (PSYCH) in Covington
Gulf States LTAC of Covington (LTAC) in Covington
Regency Hospital of Covington (LTAC) in Covington

Tangipahoa Parish

North Oaks Medical Center (ACUTE) in Hammond
Hood Memorial Hospital (ACUTE/ CRIT. ACCESS) in Amite
LSU-Lallie Kemp Regional Medical Center (ACUTE) in Independence
LSUHSC- Bogalusa Medical Center (ACUTE) in Bogalusa
Gulf States LTAC of Hammond (LTAC) in Hammond
North Oaks Rehabilitation Hospital (REHAB) in Hammond
Southeast Regional Medical Center (LTAC) in Kentwood

Surrounding Areas

Lady of the Sea General Hospital (ACUTE) in Cut Off
Leonard J. Chabert Medical Center (ACUTE) in Houma
River Parishes Hospital (ACUTE) in LaPlace
Riverside Medical Center (ACUTE/ CRIT. ACCESS) in Franklinton
St. Anne General Hospital (ACUTE) in Raceland
St. Charles Parish Hospital (ACUTE) in Luling
St. Helena Parish Hospital (ACUTE/ CRTI. ACCESS) in Greensburg
St. James Parish Hospital (ACUTE/ CRTI. ACCESS) in Litcher
Terrebonne General Medical Center (ACUTE) in Houma
Thibodaux Regional Medical Center (ACUTE) in Thibodaux
LaPlace Rehabilitation Hospital (REHAB) in LaPlace
St. Anne Rehabilitation Hospital (REHAB) in Raceland

Additional updates available at www.dhh.louisiana.gov.

Residents Reminded to Update Contact Info

The Louisiana Department of Labor urges residents to update contact information promptly. Injured workers are also reminded to contact the department to update worker compensation files. For more information, visit the LDOL Web site at www.laworks.net.

Department of Transportation and Development

The department is working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to assess and repair damaged roads, bridges and levee breaches. Updates on road closures/openings and alternative routes can be found at www.dotd.louisiana.gov. Displaced employees call (866) 783-5493 toll-free (6 a.m. to midnight) or (225) 379-1675.

News From Around Louisiana

Department of Revenue Vital Recovery Partner

Purchases of clothing and supplies made with American Red Cross debit cards/ vouchers are exempt from Louisiana state sales tax. The department considers such American Red Cross currency to be the equivalent of the organization's direct purchases and therefore extends this exemption to storm victims utilizing these forms of payment. Disaster-related tax and revenue issues are addressed on the LDR Katrina Web site at www.revenue.louisiana.gov/sections/katrina/faq.asp, or www.revenue.louisiana.gov. Effective immediately, LDR is granting an extension to January 3, 2006, to file and pay the following returns and declarations: individual and corporate estimates; withholding; partnership; individual income; and corporation income and franchise taxes. For individual income, partnership, and corporation income and franchise tax returns, a valid extension must be in place, if applicable, for the additional extension to apply. For estimated payments and withholding tax, the extension applies to all returns that would be due August 30, 2005, through December 31, 2005. This release has been expanded to all 64 parishes. Inquiries via e-mail can be addressed to louisianarecovery@la.gov.

Economic Development Helps Businesses Connect to Valuable Resources

The primary objective of Louisiana Economic Development is to help businesses connect to the resources needed to get up and running. Public, private and charitable organizations that can best assist businesses displaced or disrupted by Hurricane Katrina are currently being identified. Visit www.led.louisiana.gov or e-mail katrinabizhelp@la.gov for relocation, financial assistance and contracting information.

E-Courses Available

To help college students displaced by Katrina continue their education, the Southern Regional Education Board, in conjunction with the Sloan Foundation, has announced the creation of the Sloan Semester, a catalog of free electronic courses available to Katrina-displaced students. The catalog is now open. Students may visit the Web site to search for available courses, participating colleges and universities, and to start the enrollment process. Visit www.sloansemester.org.

Department of Insurance Helps Ease Reporting Procedures

The department offers support and assistance to help consumers with claims reporting procedures. Policyholders are advised to contact their insurance company representative as soon as possible. Telephone contact information for insurance companies serving storm areas is updated regularly on the department Web site. For more information visit www.ldi.state.la.us. Policyholders unable to reach their insurance company representative can contact the Department of Insurance at (800) 259-5300 or (225) 342-5900 for assistance. Help is available for all types of insurance questions, including home, auto, health and life. Policyholders should take pictures of all damaged property. If repairs are required prior to speaking to an adjuster, make only temporary repairs to prevent further property damage. Keep all repair receipts for possible reimbursement. If possible, wet carpet, ruined appliances or other property should not be discarded until the adjuster has seen it. If damaged items must be removed, take pictures before and after removal.

Department of Social Services a Vital Link for Families

For missing or lost children, call (800) THE-LOST or log onto www.missingkids.com. If you have found your child, please call to have his or her name removed from the missing list so that resources can be redirected to find the lost. For information about the Disaster Food Stamp Program or other social services, visit the DSS Web site at www.familiesla.com. You can also call (888) LA HELP U. The disaster support line will offer assistance

for missing persons, social security benefits, unemployment benefits and many other services. Individuals who have received disaster food stamp benefits may use them in any state in the nation. Shelters with more than 25 occupants should be registered with a local parish Office of Emergency Preparedness at (866) 310-7617, or (225) 925-1938 in Baton Rouge. This does not apply to private residences.

Army National Guard Continues Leadership Role

The National Guard has received an additional 31 missions of security, logistical, aviation, search and rescue, evacuation and transportation. Primary missions continue to be saving lives, enforcing security, evacuating residents and supporting existing critical infrastructures. Each parish in the affected area has been assigned its own Task Force (TF), which is primarily managed by TF Santa Fe. In a coordinated effort, these units are also actively supporting Federal Protective Services to ensure residents and businesses are not targets of identity theft. For more information on this and other disaster related news, visit it www.ohsep.louisiana.gov.

Department of Education Assists Students, Parents

The department call center has answered nearly 13,000 phone calls from concerned parents and teachers since Hurricane Katrina, and the department Web site, www.louisianaschools.net, is experiencing record traffic with more than 236,000 hits. Schools in Washington Parish re-opened Sept. 19. Three other school systems plan to re-open Oct. 3 – St. Tammany and Jefferson Parishes and the City of Bogalusa. Plaquemines Parish schools won't reopen until at least January 2006, and the damage is so bad in St. Bernard Parish its schools will not reopen this school year. Orleans Parish has not announced a timeline for reopening its schools. If you have questions, visit www.doe.louisiana.gov or call the toll-free hotline at (877) 453-2721.

Disaster Recovery Centers

At a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC), storm victims can have their questions answered by a FEMA recovery specialist. Also, representatives of local, state and voluntary agencies, as well as loan officers from the U.S. Small Business Administration, are on hand to provide program and service information. DRCs are open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., seven days a week, except for the Plaquemines DRC, which is open 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. to comply with the curfew.

****DRC locations and hours may change as a result of Hurricane Rita.***

Avoyelles Parish

635 East Tunica Drive
Marksville, La.

Bossier and Caddo Parishes

Old Summergrove Baptist Church
2820 Summer Grove Drive
Shreveport, La.

East Baton Rouge Parish

101 France St.
Baton Rouge, La.

Iberville Parish

Iberville Parish Library
24605 J. Gerald Barrett Blvd.
(Hwy. 1)
Plaquemine, La.

Lafayette Parish

111 Liberty Ave.
Lafayette, La.

Lafourche Parish

Jack's Department Store
513 St. Mary Street
Thibodaux, La.

Orleans Parish

Landry High School
Whitney Ave. and LaMarque Street
Algiers, La.

Quachita Parish

Civic Center Conference Hall
401 Lea Joyner Memorial Exp.
Monroe, La.

Plaquemines Parish

Plaquemines Primary School
539 Edward Herbert Blvd.
Belle Chasse, La.

Rapides Parish

Old Office Max Building
2255 Macarthur Drive
Alexandria, La.

St. Charles Parish

Bingo Hall
13415 Highway 90
Boutte, La.

St. James Parish

Lions Club Building
29126 Health Unit Street
Vacherie, La.

St. Tammany Parish

John Slidell Municipal Park
Recreation Center
105 Robert Road
Slidell, La.

Washington Parish

Living Word Christian Church
539 Avenue V
Bogalusa, La.

Hillcrest Baptist Church

2201 East Washington Street
Franklinton, La.

Webster Parish

Old Wal-Mart Store
1100 Homer Rd.
Minden, La.

Satellite TV, XM Radio Now in Shelters, DRCs

DISH Satellite TV Network and XM Satellite Radio are providing up-to-date disaster assistance information to Hurricane Katrina evacuees in shelters and other locations across the country. DISH TV Network is currently available in dozens of shelters, and that number is expected to increase as more FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers open in the Gulf Coast area. XM Satellite Radio has offered FEMA access to its emergency information network through the XM Red Cross Network on channel 248 and its around-the-clock Emergency Alert channel on 247. DISH TV customers can find disaster information on channel 206; government updates are provided every day between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m., with repeats throughout the day. In addition to broadcasting daily media briefings, FEMA will produce and deliver disaster assistance information on such topics as housing, flood insurance, the registration process and other issues of interest to evacuees.

Insurance Tips

If your community has been flooded and your property or home suffered flood damage, follow these steps to file a flood insurance claim: (1) Call your agent or insurance company. Have your policy number and a telephone number or e-mail address where you can be reached, or provide a designated point of contact who can reach you. (2) For help in obtaining the name of your insurance company and/or policy number, call **(800) 427-4661**. (3) When you file your claim, ask for an approximate timeframe when the adjuster may visit your home.

Federal Courts

Hurricane Katrina has displaced much of the local population and closed courthouses in the eastern judicial district of Louisiana. Individuals who normally report to the federal Probation and Pre-trial Services Offices in New Orleans should call (888) 433-5996.